

For many, Friday was just another day, but for Congress October 8 was the target adjournment date before a scheduled break for the fall elections. With so much important legislation left unfinished by the U.S. House of Representatives, you would have thought that Speaker Pelosi would keep the House busy right up until October 8. Instead, she sent lawmakers home a week early, leaving unresolved a number of major issues, including whether to allow massive tax increases to fall on the backs of most Americans in January.

The speaker's decision to leave Americans in limbo over the possibility of more job-killing taxes was about as controversial as the tax increase issue itself. The final vote to adjourn early passed by only one vote (210 to 209), having been opposed by 39 Democrats and every Republican House member. I voted against this irresponsible decision.

Why did Speaker Pelosi turn out the lights on September 29, the earliest House adjournment date in nearly 50 years? In short, because of "jobs." No, not to help save and grow the jobs of the majority of the American people, but rather to protect the threatened jobs of her liberal majority in Congress. Before leaving town the speaker even had the nerve to attack House Republican leader John Boehner's floor speech opposing a House shutdown without extending the tax cuts. Ironically, Speaker Pelosi charged Mr. Boehner with having no ideas of his own to move America forward.

The liberal leadership of the House doesn't want to hold a vote on extending the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts because they know they are on the wrong side of the issue. With the national unemployment rate hovering at 9.6 percent and close to 15 million Americans looking for work, the idea of imposing a \$3.9 trillion tax increase on a weak economy is widely unpopular and, frankly, defies common sense.

Together, President Obama and Speaker Pelosi have presided over the largest increase in federal spending in recent memory – vastly expanding the long-term federal budget deficit while at the same time attacking conservatives for opposing plans to dramatically raise taxes to help pay for liberal spending sprees.

If they get their way, the president and the speaker would raise taxes on America's most dependable job creators – small businesses – just as they fight to stay afloat after the worst recession since the 1930's. The Obama-Pelosi tax increases would hit 75 percent of small business owners filing at individual rates. This strategy guarantees stagnant job growth.

I join with the House Republican leadership in calling on Speaker Pelosi to return the House to session to vote on extending the 2001 and 2003 tax relief. America cannot move forward without the hope and optimism that continued tax relief will provide our small business owners and job creators.

Oil Spill Commission Critical of Administration's Spin:

Last week, President Obama's National Commission on the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling released a draft report criticizing the administration's low-balling of the Gulf oil spill impact.

The commission's draft findings are a validation of what most of us along the Gulf Coast believed from the earliest days of the well blow out. The administration was slow to recognize the severity of the oil leak and significantly underestimated the volume of oil flowing from the damaged well. Even today, the administration does not speak authoritatively about the continued presence of oil in the Gulf.

The report also indicates the administration created the impression that it was "either not fully competent" or "not fully candid with the American people about the scope of the problem."

One of the commission's working papers said, "Putting aside the question of whether the public had a right to know the worst-case discharge figures, disclosure of those estimates, and explanation of their role in guiding the government effort, may have improved public confidence in the response."

The report also rebukes administration officials for public statements downplaying the continued presence of oil in the Gulf following the well's temporary seal in late July. The commission said the administration's statements – based on a non peer-reviewed oil report - were "inaccurate and led to news reports that were misleading."

If these findings by President Obama's own commission are true, they are troubling to me and to all those who have felt this administration was slow to respond and commit adequate resources to this crisis.

I've not met anyone along the Gulf Coast who believes that most of the oil from the April 20 spill is gone. The administration has a responsibility to see this matter through and must be held accountable for any attempts to downplay the spill's impact or to sidestep its role in containing the damage.

My staff and I work for you. If we can ever be of service, do not hesitate to call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.